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# The Negro high school student: A study in Omaha Central high school (1935-1941)

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THE NEGRO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT

A STUDY OF THE NEGRO STUDENTS  
IN OMAHA CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL  
(1935--1941)

by

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts  
in the  
Department of Sociology  
of the  
Municipal University of Omaha  
1942

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### Reason for Study

There has been a need, for some time, for a study of the Negro student in a cosmopolitan high school. First, to discover from the standpoint of the Negro whether he was being given the opportunities that should rightfully be his and also to determine to what extent he is accepting his responsibilities. Second, to find out if the school was carrying out its part in providing the Negro with the proper subject matter and activities.

There has been the thought among some people, both Negro and whites, that the Negro child was allowed to attend the public schools but was limited in what he was permitted to take in the way of subject matter and participation in activities of the school. From the accompanying tables one will see that the Negro student in Central High School takes the subjects of his choice. A Senior Negro girl with whom I talked has the belief that one gets out of school what one puts into it. She believes that the Negro student at Central High School has an equal chance to do what he wants to do. She also stated that the Negro students who complain are of the lower social group who are in the habit of easily being disturbed. Mr. M., a leader in Negro work, says that "The Negro student in high school has the same opportunity as anyone else. The reason he does not take part in school activities is that he himself is not interested."

The Negroes who attend Central High School of Omaha, Nebraska, represent one section of our city and chiefly the upper and middle classes of Negroes based upon social and economic conditions of that section. This section lies principally between Cuming Street on the south, Finney Street on the north, Thirty-third Street on the west,

and Nineteenth Street on the east.

Central High School was chosen for this study as it represents a typically American high school where one finds a good cross section of the different nationalities and races of people. Also the students of the school as a whole represent the various economic levels of our society from the lowest to the highest. The Negro students who attend Central High School include typical cross sections of their people. Since Central is principally a college preparatory high school, it would seem to offer an excellent opportunity to study the economic, and educational classes of the Negro people.

The names of the Negro students at Central High School were taken from the Permanent Record files. This study deals with the total number of Negroes enrolled over a six-year period extending from September 1935 to June 1941. The total number 376.

#### Use of School Records

On file in Central High School office are Permanent Record Cards--one card for each individual who has ever been enrolled in the high school. Each card contains the complete scholastic record of the individual it represents; that is, what subjects were undertaken, what numerical grade was obtained in each subject, what numerical scholastic ranking the individual attained who was graduated.

As the students graduate, the school makes a list, ranking the graduates according to the grades they have earned in their work at Central. An A grade is 3, B grade is 2, C grade is 1, D grade is 0. To obtain the ranking one adds all the A's together, all the B's together, all the C's together. This sum total is then divided by

the total number of grades made including the number of D's. The grading system used at Central is the four-letter system. A = 90--100%, B = 80--89%, C = 70--79%, D = below 70% or failing.

#### Personal Record Cards

There is also a Personal Record Card which was filed by each student soon after his enrollment in the high school. This card contains the information used concerning the background of the individual studied. This material pertains to the birthplace of the individual, the birthplace of the parents, and the occupation of the parent.

#### Annals or Yearbooks

Each year the graduating class of Central High School has published a yearbook or annual. Some of these have been much more comprehensive than others, but all of them have contained a complete record of the activities in which each graduating senior has participated. This record also indicates any honors which the senior may have won prior to his graduation. A complete file of these yearbooks has been kept in the office files of the high school, and these furnished the basis for information concerning activities during the high school period.

#### Questionnaire

To each individual who had dropped school before graduating, a questionnaire was personally given ~~to them~~. This questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part was a question and answer and sought information. What caused you to drop school? What have you been doing since? What do you suggest that the schools do to keep the Negro student in school? The second part of the questionnaire proposed that the individual add further suggestions or criticisms.

This was fairly successful, but some could not be reached as they had changed their addresses many times within the city and some had left the city.

A follow-up was made of the graduates by making personal calls when possible, or obtaining information from their friends.

Every student when he enrolls at Central fills out what is known as a program card.<sup>1</sup> This contains the names of the subjects he is carrying, his parent's name, parent's birthplace, parent's occupation. It also contains his age, place of birth, and address. When the student has completed one semester of school, he will have a permanent record card<sup>2</sup> made out for him by the school, upon which are placed the grades earned by the student. If this student drops school or transfers to another school, the attendance clerk of Central High School records this information on the card with the date.

When new students come to Central, an attempt is made to give each student the Otis Self-Administering test, and the grades from this test are recorded on his permanent record card. This I. Q. grade is used only as an indication of what the student should be expected to do.

The students who transferred from Central to the other public high schools of the city were followed up and Table Number III shows what has become of them.

As conclusions from the foregoing study, the Negro students at Central are about average of all the students at the time they come from the eighth grade. However, they take, on the average, one more year to the high school work than do the white students. They do not

<sup>1</sup>See appendix for Program card. P. 69

<sup>2</sup>See appendix for Permanent Record cards. P. 72

take, on an average, as heavy a load, nor do they generally take the more difficult subjects. The Negro student is more satisfied just to get by, which attitude is partially due to his environment. A high percentage of the Negro students drop out of school when they reach sixteen years of age.

### Cultural Development

#### The History of the Negro Race

Nearly all authorities are agreed that early man originated in Asia. There were four main divisions or races, namely, Australoid, Negroid, Mongoloid, and Caucasian.<sup>3</sup> The Caucasian Race, which populated the northern Asia, migrated south ahead of the glacial period and were responsible for pushing the black race or Negroids southeast into what is now India and south into Africa. From tributes illustrated on the Theban monuments, that some of the fugitives from Egypt had prospered in the African interior, many barriers were raised against the Negroes, and they found themselves hemmed in on all sides. It has been only within the last seventy-five years that civilization can be said to have secured a sure footing in the interior and that we have been able to estimate the effects of certainly seven thousand years in-breeding consequent upon the long segregation of the black people within their impossible boundaries.

Thus we have a large group of people who became segregated by race and geographical boundaries from the rest of society. These people were later to become a part of the most far-reaching race conflict in the western hemisphere.

<sup>3</sup>Robert Lourie--Introduction to Cultural Anthropology, p. 9

## The Negro in the Building of America

The Negro began his contribution in the early days when Western Europe moved to the "discovery" and exploration of the New World.<sup>4</sup> Black men were with Menendez, Balboa, Cortez, De Leon, De Soto, and others. From 1527 to 1539 Stephen Dorantes tramped across a great deal of what is now the Southeastern and Southwestern parts of the United States. Jean Point Du Sable was the first permanent resident, the founder of the present city of Chicago. There was one Negro with the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1804.

Few will deny the role of labor as the basis of modern civilization. The involuntary gift of some two centuries of slave labor was a tremendous contribution, despite the inhumanity of such human bondage.

In spite of restrictions that were put upon it from time to time, the Slave Trade continued to flourish to the time of the American Revolution, when for a time it ceased, only to leap into a more vigorous life at the close of the war. At the beginning of the nineteenth century there were about 800,000 gainfully employed black workers. In 1930, 25,000 retail merchants were doing a business of \$101,000,000. There are approximately 800,000 farmers, one-fifth of whom are owners. The great consumers' market is yet unorganized. The share-cropper and the tenant-farmer are on the increase.

The golden age of the Negro in politics came during the Reconstruction and post-Reconstruction periods. Like the poorer whites of the South, the freedmen received, for the first time, the general rights of the electorate. Some served in the state and local governments. From 1870 to 1901 twenty-two held seats in the national

<sup>4</sup>L. D. Reddick, School-Society, February 8, 1941

Congress. Two of these, Hiram W. Revels and Blanche K. Bruce, were senators.

The constitutions of the reconstructed states were liberalized, systems of public education were established, and great strides were made in social legislation.

Through legal and extra-legal devices, the Negro was ultimately pushed out of politics. This wholesale disfranchisement left him as a negligible political factor until the first World War. At that time European immigration was shut off. The great trek of the Southern Negroes to northern cities began. They were answering the call of expanding industries. They found no racial restrictions on suffrage in the new regions. Accordingly today the Negro vote in sixteen states is strategic, if not decisive. Also in many cities the Negro vote is greatly desired as it will determine the elections. There was and still is a growing tolerance in the border states. There are Negro members in the legislatures in a dozen states, including Kentucky, one Negro in the national Congress; and four Negro judges in one city, New York.

It was illegal to teach a slave to read or write, although some slaves surmounted this barrier. Hence at the time of the Emancipation Proclamation, the vast majority were illiterate. Even so, there appears to have been an insatiable thirst for knowledge. The freedman flocked to the schools. The Freedman's Bureau of the federal government, the American Missionary Association, and private philanthropy united in setting up such schools as Fisk, Howard, Hampton, and Atlanta. With the aid of the state of Alabama, Booker T. Washington founded Tuskegee. Here he was to elaborate a theory of education--Learn by Doing--which



has become one cornerstone in the philosophy of American education.

Hence Negro illiteracy in 1930 was only 16.3 per cent. The percentage of illiteracy in 1930 among Negroes in cities averaged about 5.0 per cent.<sup>5</sup> Notwithstanding the disparities, there are today 2,000,000 Negro pupils in the southern schools alone. There have been 43,821 Negro college graduates; some 200 have made Phi Beta Kappa, and an equal number have won the Doctor of Philosophy degree.

The Negro church has always been more than purely a "religious institution". Yesterday and today the church met and meets a broad social and recreational need. Some churches were stations on the Underground Railroad. Others were meeting places for planning as well as for festival. Today there are 24 denominations with a total membership of 5,000,000.

In fiction, poetry, art, and sports the Negro with liberty and education has achieved much.

History of the last thirty-five years proves conclusively that the great mass of Negro children can assimilate the ordinary education of the common schools.<sup>6</sup> Mr. Glenn, formerly Superintendent of Education in Georgia, declares that "the Negro is teachable and susceptible to the same kind of mental improvement characteristic of any other race."<sup>7</sup>

The Negroes of Nebraska constitute, from an ethnic standpoint, one of the most sharply defined of all racial elements in the state. Several factors have operated in the preservation of their racial integrity. The great majority of them came from the South, bringing with them a common culture, heritage, and mode of living. Once settled in Nebraska, both social and economic motives directed their

<sup>5</sup>World Almanac and Book of Facts, 1942, p. 331

<sup>6</sup>Julia E. Johnson--The Negro Problem, p. 181

<sup>7</sup>Ibid--p. 181

concentration in relatively circumscribed districts. Segregation, proscription of inter-marriage, social and economic discrimination, racial differences, and divergent living standards all comprise, however veiled, a none-the-less tangible barrier which to this day has held the Negro at a singularly low level, as compared with other immigrant groups.

While the early lack of leadership among the Negroes has retarded their development along many lines, yet, when they have had competent leaders, there has been a lack of cooperation among the Negro masses necessary for proper development. Still it is unfair to assume that the Negroes themselves are alone responsible for their failure to attain a higher status than that now assigned to them. Starting with nothing but hope and determination, sometimes almost aboriginally ignorant and unusually illiterate, they have even thus handicapped taken enormous strides toward social and economic parity with the white race.

Soon after their emancipation the necessity for earning a living in the field of competitive labor in the South faced the erstwhile slaves. The development of the West, coincident with the disturbing economic upheavals in the South, attracted the attention of many of the dissatisfied freedmen.

Nebraska, with new industries springing up in the larger communities, attracted its share of the northward-bound Negro immigrants. Omaha especially became the point where the majority of them settled and established homes. There were jobs here for them, a chance to make a living. The railroads were pushing construction through the state. Later during several labor disputes, Negroes were imported for

use as strike-breakers: by the Union Pacific railroad in 1877; by the smelting industry in 1880; by the packing industry in 1894; and by the Burlington Railroad in 1923. After the strikes ended, most of the strike-breakers found more or less permanent jobs in the particular industry in which they were involved.

During the World War the shortage of laborers, particularly in the packing plants, became acute. By various means, including Negro newspapers and labor agents, aided by reduced fares offered by the railroad, Negroes in large numbers were induced to come from the South to Nebraska, where they were assured of steady work at good wages.

According to the 1940 Census, Omaha, Nebraska's largest city, with a total population of 223,844,<sup>8</sup> has the majority of Nebraska's Negroes, numbering 13,000. The total Negro population of Nebraska in 1940 was estimated at 15,000. In 1930 it was 13,752, with Omaha claiming 11,123 or 80.9 percent, Lincoln 7.2 percent, and other scattered localities.

Of the Negroes in Omaha only 22.7 percent were born in Nebraska, with most of the remaining 77.3 percent born in Missouri, Texas, Kansas, Alabama, Arkansas, and Oklahoma.<sup>9</sup>

In regard to size of families the median in Nebraska, according to the 1930 Census, of total population was 3.40 persons. The median for Negroes was 2.41 percent.

In comparisons to other races, the incomes reported by Negroes show that their financial status as a group to be on the same low level as that of their economic status in general. In direct ratio

<sup>8</sup>Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, Population, First Series, Number of Inhabitants of Nebraska, p. 2

<sup>9</sup>Nebraska State Planning Board, Nebraska's Population, 1940, p. 16

to their low income, the standard of living among Negroes of Nebraska is lower than that of any other group in the state.

In keeping with their low economic status, the incidence of home ownership among Nebraska Negroes is low. In the sampling taken in this study of the one hundred families, fifty-four percent were found to own their homes. About fifteen percent of Negro homes are owned by Negroes, but a majority of these are encumbered.

The health problem among the Negroes bears a close correlation with their standard of living, which is in turn dependant upon their economic status. Mortality among the group is excessively high in comparison with the average mortality for all other races. The high death rate assumes a more serious aspect when one considers that, although their death rate is greater than that of other races, in Nebraska their death rate is greater than their birth rate.<sup>10</sup> The high death rate is due to many factors, namely, working mothers, lack of parental care of infants, delayed medication, quack doctors, congested living conditions and poor sanitation.

The Negroes of Nebraska constitute a significant factor in the economic life of the state. That the race has made enormous progress in its economic and social life since the first illiterate, unskilled ex-slaves appeared in Nebraska is obvious; yet the fact remains that there is much to be accomplished before Negroes may be considered an integral unit in Nebraska's economic pattern. A number of complications, including discrimination (whether tacit or open), low wages, long hours, irregular employment, and others, have not served to ease the economic pressure on the Negroes. If it be said that these com-

<sup>10</sup>The Negroes of Nebraska

Workers of the Writer's Program, Works Progress Administration  
in the State of Nebraska, 1940, p. 20

plications arise from the fact that the race has borne a reputation for shiftlessness and irresponsibility, it may also be said that Negroes are not accorded the same incentive for advancement in employment as are other groups. Still it seems possible that their chances for better jobs would be greater were they better prepared and trained for such jobs.

While in the earlier years of Northern migration of the Negro, the scarcity of wise, educated Negro leadership handicapped the Negro social and educational progress. The last fifty years of Negro higher education has provided a racial leadership functioning typically and helpfully in Nebraska where its cities are not too large nor its Negro population too congested.

To this end they have established a number of organizations, some of which are state branches of national societies for the purpose of bettering the civic status of Negroes. Several of the organizations are National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, State Urban League, Negro Chamber of Commerce of Omaha. Negroes are employed in various branches of both the city and the county government. One Unicameral district of the state is represented by a Negro Senator. The Negro people are an influence in our city elections; they are a controlling factor in that they generally stick together on candidates and issues.

A branch of the Young Women's Christian Association, known as the North Side Y. W. C. A., was organized in 1919 for the Negro girls of Omaha. It provides an organization for high school girls known as the

**Girl Reserves.** Many of the Negro girls of Central are very active in this organization. It provides one of their chief social activities.

Also, the Negroes are well represented with Fraternal organizations both for men and for women.

There are twenty-eight churches in Omaha for the Negro. The Baptist and the Methodist Episcopal are the two larger denominations. There are other groups that call themselves religious organizations, but most of the Negro people refer to them as store front churches. In this latter group are many branches of the so-called Church of God.

The Negro people in the State of Nebraska are using every effort to demonstrate to the people of the State that they are deserving of equal consideration with all others in the economic and social life of Nebraska. They are urging their people to improve their efficiency through higher education. The Negroes feel that one of the greatest problems confronting them as a group is the problem of adjustment.<sup>11</sup> This problem of adjustment particularly involves interracial attitudes and relations. Economically and socially they are faced with problems arising from causes over which they have little or no control. There are social leaders of both races who believe that no society can function harmoniously so long as a portion of its citizens is handicapped economically and socially. The Negroes, realizing this handicap, are doing what they can to level such existing interracial barriers as hinder their progress toward social and economic parity with other racial groups in the state.

Even more disheartening perhaps than the financial hindrance is a consciousness of social suppression. Children are brought up under

<sup>11</sup>The Negroes of Nebraska, Workers of the Writers Program, Work Progress Administration in the State of Nebraska, 1940, p. 46

this condition. They constantly have to watch themselves to see what society will say before they can go ahead. It seems to hinder them in doing exactly what they want to and sometimes in doing their best. Students, according to some of the Negro leaders, do much better when they get away from home and from local associations.

An implication of the democratic ideal in American education is that practical account will be taken of differences in individual abilities but not indiscriminately of groups. In practice, however, our education may be said to be neither ideal nor democratic, although it pays respect to the democratic ideal in the standardization of its structure. The standardization itself is by no means the least of the present problem of American education.

It is part of our educational philosophy to assume that the objectives of education and the social opportunities for pupils after completing the prescribed routine are, generally speaking, the same. This achievement as everyone knows, is wide of the fact and, essentially, impossible in the present organization of society. It is possible that various sociological groups of the population may have an equal number of problems, but these problems are not of the same kind. It is doubtful if any general curricular prescription can accomplish the leveling in theory which the local culture so insistently denies in fact.

The social life of the Negro today is the result of a developing process which began with the first slaves in the states. Up to this time they had lived as a separate and distinct race more or less isolated from the rest of the world.

The process of acculturation for the Negro is therefore one of acquiring new traits out of the general culture in which he has lived without sharing beyond a prescribed sphere. Since this process has been under way a great many years the Negro group in America, having no unique culture of its own, lives on different planes of the American culture. The difference between a Negro professional family of long residence in a city and a Negro plantation family is a measure of the distance between these planes.

The process of acculturation is a slow and uneven one, the rate appearing to be conditioned more by the special environment than by any inherent set of racial traits. This fact has an important bearing upon the problem of Negro education. The differences in the environment of Negro children vary widely according to contrasting areas of the North.

The social institutions into which the Negro child is born define, initially, his status, however carefully he might be sheltered from their implications by his family. The first conditioning of any child is a matter of modifying his impulses in conformity with these institutions, as a practical means of surviving in them. In the case of the Negro child such modifications of behavior carries with it, essentially, the implication of inferior social status which must be accepted because it cannot be changed. There there is self-consciousness in the adjustment, it is impossible to escape the conflict between the educational philosophy, which assumed participation in the culture, and the Negro child's fixed status of limited participation. Most often, however, the process is not self-conscious, and his defined status is accepted, along with its limitations, as a matter of course.



Another important lament of the Negro child's environment is the social life of the Negro group itself and of his family in particular. The isolation of the Negro group is responsible for the general cultural lag of a large volume of this population, and this lag is represented in the longer survival of old folk-beliefs and customs taken over from early American colonists, together with special adaptive practices of the Negroes in relation to their environment. As a consequence the Negro child inherits a set of folkways which, while perhaps quaint and in a manner useful, are nevertheless based upon different and outmoded values.

It seems necessary that the Negro child should be educated to live in more than one world. American Sociological Review, by Charles C. Johnson<sup>12</sup> states that an important function of Negro education is to create marginality. Usually the term "Marginal" is used when referring to two cultures. However, only one culture is involved in the case of the Negro children. But there can be marginality between the planes or levels of this single culture as well. In fact, this seems to be the process by which individuals rise in society. The most successfully educated Negroes are marginals. They understand and live on more than one plane of culture. Marginality, under the circumstances, far from being a disadvantage, seems to offer an opportunity for organization of personality around new values not wholly dependent upon either social world. In the process of acculturation those traits are adopted which have some function. The trait taken over may be one regarded as socially useful or socially bad. The process is going on constantly within the Negro group,

<sup>12</sup> American Sociological Review, April 1936, Charles C. Johnson, "Education of the Negro Child", p. 269

without regulation and frequently without being understood. It is possible to explain much of the Negro's shortcomings in business, in economic interest, in crime, and in adjustments to the Northern cities. Since we find many Negroes with warped personalities, it might be well to have some special educational procedure. Carl C. Johnson<sup>13</sup> sets forth several points in a possible program for the Negro:

- (1) Begin the education of the Negro child within his own intimate experience.

- (2) Such education should transmit the basic tools and techniques of the realistic common world of communication, of work, and of control of the physical environment.

- (3) Education of the Negro should be realistic. He should be aware of his environment and his role in it. He should know the present limitations of his environment and why it is limited.

- (4) His education should include a broader range of social and individual patterns and experiences within the known limits of his cultural environment.

- (5) Greater stress upon the Negro's aesthetic life. The Negro child can be taught with real conviction the beauties of his own life. What is true of his life and characteristics is true of his environment.

The school is a unifying agency in the community and, as such, has an extremely important role.

Then the question arises as to what the schools are doing or can do to give these Negro students the proper courses and to see that the Negro students are interested in studying them.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid, pp. 270-271

These problems do exist among the Negroes and manifest themselves in low physical standards of living, in lowered vitality, in behavior problems, in juvenile delinquency, and in other directions.

#### Economic and Social Classes of

#### Those Who Are in School, Left, or Graduated

Edward Franklin Frazier<sup>14</sup> defines these economic and social classes as follows: The upper class is composed of professional people, proprietors, managers, officials, and clerks. The second class or the middle class includes the skilled and most of the semi-skilled workers and a majority of the female domestic servants. The lower class consists of unskilled laborers and many domestic workers. Using Frazier's definition as a guide, we find that Central students come principally from the middle or second group.

From the following table one can see the classification according to the principal occupations as listed by the students on their enrollment cards,<sup>15</sup> and the spread of the students as to the ones in school, those dropped or left school, and those graduated.

Table I

|                                  | <u>Boys</u>      |             |                  | <u>Girls</u>     |             |                  |
|----------------------------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|------------------|
|                                  | <u>In School</u> | <u>Left</u> | <u>Graduated</u> | <u>In School</u> | <u>Left</u> | <u>Graduated</u> |
| First Class<br>or<br>Upper Class | 3                | 9           | 9                | 13               | 7           | 7                |
| Middle Class                     | 29               | 38          | 27               | 66               | 53          | 36               |
| Lower Class                      | 4                | 12          | 7                | 24               | 22          | 15               |

<sup>14</sup>E. F. Frazier, *The Negro at the Crossroads*, pp. 23-28

<sup>15</sup>See appendix for enrollment card. p. 71

This table shows the part that the economic and social conditions of the home have in determining the type of school attendance. By the following interview with Mr. X., of the Omaha Urban League, can be shown the attitude of the Urban League toward the value of Central High School: "It is a good thing for our people to go to Central in that we meet and associate with a better class of people, and from this association obtain ideas which we can adopt. I know that a good many of our boys who have gone to Central are more particular about their personal appearance, have better behavior patterns, and are able to obtain jobs because they are polite, courteous, and make a good impression. They have higher standards of morals and decency because they realize the need for these things. Young men who have attended Central and are now married have better behaved children and better home surroundings than the average. I think they should attend college if possible as a College Education puts one on a higher economic plane; but if unable to go to college, a High School education can do much for one."

When asked if a better or higher social group of students attends Central than attend the other high schools, he replied, "I think that most of the people who choose to attend Central High School come from the better economic groups and naturally have better homes and live in the sections where they have better houses."

Table II

| Grade Schools  | Schools Represented |              |           |           |               |               | Total |
|----------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|---------------|---------------|-------|
|                | In School           | Boys<br>Left | Graduated | In School | Girls<br>Left | Graduated     |       |
| Howard Kennedy | 10                  | 15           | 15        | 25        | 24            | 17            | 108   |
| Long           | 4                   | 15           | 5         | 21        | 22            | 20            | 86    |
| Lake           | 4                   | 2            | 6         | 10        | 8             | 2             | 32    |
| Kellom         | 7                   | 2            | 1         | 10        | 6             | 3             | 29    |
| Lothrop        | 1                   | 4            | 2         | 6         | 4             | 3             | 20    |
| Jackson        | 1                   | --           | 2         | --        | --            | 3             | 6     |
| Webster        | 3                   | --           | --        | 1         | --            | 1             | 5     |
| Franklin       | 1                   | --           | 1         | 1         | --            | 1             | 4     |
| Central        | --                  | --           | --        | 1         | 1             | 1             | 3     |
| Walnut Hill    | --                  | --           | 1         | --        | --            | 1             | 2     |
| Comenius       | --                  | --           | --        | 2         | --            | --            | 2     |
| West Side      | --                  | --           | --        | --        | 2             | --            | 2     |
| Lincoln        | --                  | --           | 2         | --        | --            | --            | 2     |
| Dundee         | 1                   | --           | --        | --        | --            | --            | 1     |
| St. Benedict   | --                  | 3            | 2         | --        | 3             | --            | 8     |
| St. James      | --                  | 1            | --        | --        | --            | --            | 1     |
| Outside Omaha  | 3                   | 2            | 1         | 5         | 20            | 2             | 33    |
| Tech           | 3                   | 11           | 1         | 1         | 4             | 1             | 21    |
| North          | --                  | 2            | --        | --        | --            | --            | 2     |
| South          | --                  | --           | 1         | --        | --            | --            | 1     |
| 20 Schools     |                     |              |           |           |               | Students..... | 576   |

The grade schools which are represented in Central show that the students who choose to attend Central live in the section that Mr. X. spoke of, and, according to him represent a higher social and economic group. The table on school representation shows that the great bulk of the students come from five principal public grade schools with a scattering from nine other public grade schools, two parochial schools, and three other public high schools. The large transfer group from other high schools can be explained by the fact that they are not able to adjust themselves and move to another school hoping for better associations, easier work, or a different course of study. Many of these transfers soon drop out or leave school as shown in the table comparing the number who are in school or have

brought out by this table is the group outside of Omaha. This group includes all students who came into Central from schools of other towns. While 8.7 percent of the total number studied came from schools outside Omaha, only 33 and 1/3 percent of these groups of students are either graduated from Central or remain in school. It is true that the large drop of this group can be accounted for in two ways: First, many have migrated with their parents from the South where the schools are much different, and they are unable to adjust themselves readily. Second,<sup>16</sup> many are of the lower economic groups, and it becomes necessary for them to get employment as soon as they are old enough to meet the state requirements.

#### Why Choose Central

The question, "Why did you choose Central in preference to Technical High?" was asked fifty individuals. The sampling was made of every sixth name in the list which included within it eighteen boys and thirty-three girls. The findings are as follows:

|                                  |    |
|----------------------------------|----|
| College Prep Course.....         | 12 |
| Social Distinction.....          | 18 |
| Athletics.....                   | 4  |
| Music.....                       | 4  |
| Closer Distance to School.....   | 3  |
| Friend or Relative Attending.... | 7  |
| No Special Reason.....           | 2  |

This seems to verify the attitude of a Senior girl to whom I talked concerning the above question.

Miss A., whose father is a meat cutter in one of the packing plants, came to Central from Howard Kennedy school. Her reason for coming to Central was to associate with a better group of students whose parents have more money to spend and live on a higher social plane. When asked when this social grouping of students took place, she said it started in the elementary grades. Her idea was that the students from Howard Kennedy, Long, and Lothrop were more desirable socially than those from Kellom and Lake. She thought, however, that the district around Kellom school would change somewhat with the building of the Fontenelle Homes. When asked what occupations afforded a higher social level, she named Butchers, Chefs, Professionals, Waiters, Merchants, and some Porters.

There seems to be a feeling among the Negro people that the students who attend Central have more social class than those who go to the other high schools. This also partially coincides with what Mr. X. stated in his interview.

Central High School offers two principal courses in its curriculum: namely, collage preparatory and high school. The college preparatory course<sup>17</sup> offers subjects that will permit a graduate to enter most colleges and universities in the United States. The high school course<sup>18</sup> offers the student the necessary subjects for a well rounded education. In this course it is possible for a student to specialize in some particular field such as music, art, secretarial training and wood working. The following table will show that the high school course is more popular with Negro students than the college preparatory course.

Table III

Table showing the number of Negroes taking the two courses of study offered by Central High School.

|                     | <u>In School</u> | <u>Boys</u><br><u>Drops</u> | <u>Grads.</u> | <u>In School</u> | <u>Girls</u><br><u>Drops</u> | <u>Grads.</u> |
|---------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| College Preparatory | 14               | 22                          | 20            | 12               | 21                           | 32            |
| General High School | 21               | 35                          | 22            | 71               | 73                           | 21            |

Of the thirty-five boys in school only eight or .228 percent are enrolled in shop. With the eighty-three girls, forty-three are enrolled in home economics.

The policy of the administration is to direct the students to take the subjects from which they will derive the most from I. Q. tests given with results shown in Table IV. The I. Q's. of the Negro students are below the median of the whole school. Using this as an indication, we can draw the conclusion that for the Negro as a whole, Shop and Home Economics would be very advantageous. This conclusion also is shown in another way, namely, the decline in the number who

17 and 18 See appendix for courses offered. p. 64



are electing a language. Since it has become possible to enter some Colleges and Universities without a language, only one boy out of thirty-five and nine out of eighty-three girls are taking a language with their present program. Another conclusion that one might gather from the above table is that the Negroes looking ahead are finding that Attending a high school and taking a general or College Preparatory course with electives in a few special lines will give them a better balanced background for chances in society. This decision is illustrated by a personal interview with Mr. A., who graduated from Central in 1939. "It is much better in my judgment to have taken a general High School Course with some elective subjects than to have gone to a school where one would have to major in shop or mechanics. I think a general course is more beneficial as one learns to adjust himself and can make a better impression upon society." Of the girls who are taking a College Preparatory course, 90 percent are now including Home Economics as compared to 13 percent of those graduated who included it. Many realize that Homemaking will prepare them better for marriage if they are unable to attend College. The group of Negro students who plan the type of work they want to do and also the kinds that are open to them have an opinion similar to Mr. A's. The last eight years have been rather trying upon the Negroes. When the crash hit, they were the first to be dismissed by employers and now are the last to be employed. The Negro student in the past has had a very indifferent attitude, but today this is somewhat changed. He can, if he is polite, clean, neatly dressed and honest, get certain kinds of jobs. This is one of the chief

reasons why the Negro comes to Central and takes the courses it offers, as he feels he would be better prepared than by taking an industrial arts course.

Twenty-one percent of the Negro boys now in school have elected shop, only eight and seven tenths percent of the boys who dropped school had elected shop, while none of the boys who have graduated had taken any shop. This indifference to mechanics among the Negroes here was found by Jonathan Daniels<sup>19</sup> in North Carolina also. In the big body of workers mobilized to build two army camps, in the total number of men given jobs, the Negroes have received their proportionate share on a population basis. But among the skilled workers in a state in which nearly a third of the people are colored, only one job in twenty has gone to a Negro.

This deficiency in skilled Negro laborers is due not only to the young Negro's disinclination in the schooling to choose mechanics but also to labor's long exclusion of the Negro from skilled jobs. It represents a long process by which not in a crisis but across the years the old-time Negro craftsmen have been decreasing in number and younger Negroes have been barred from trades. In all the years during which the number of Negro doctors, lawyers, teachers, and dentists have been growing in a segregate all-Negro world, the essential middle class of skilled men has been disappearing. This leaves the race empty in the skills between the bottom and the top. A Negro must be a leader or a laborer. There is hardly a chance for him between the two categories. The Negroes will patronize to a certain extent the members of their race who are professionally prepared,

<sup>19</sup>Jonathan Daniels, "A Native at Large", *The Nation*, Feb. 8, 1941, p. 158

but they cannot expect any patronage from the whites. Here the white man sees in the Negro the opportunity to look after his own people and to do the unskilled jobs for the whites.

Relative to this scarcity of skilled mechanics, Mr. B., a prominent leader among the Negro people of Omaha, said that it is made very difficult for a Negro student to take an Industrial Arts course in the schools that specialize in this work. Yet it is his conviction that the Negro can be just as good a mechanic as can a white person. This opinion of Mr. B. does not agree with the aptitude test given at Omaha Technical High School, according to Mr. D. E. Porter, Principal. This test showed the Negro to rank very low in manuals and skills. Very few ever develop to a good mechanics, according to the findings at Omaha Technical High School.

Table IV

INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Boys in School.....99                             | Girls in School.....97                             |
| Boys Left.....94                                  | Girls Left.....91                                  |
| Boys Dropped.....90 plus                          | Girls Dropped.....81                               |
| Boys Graduated.....100                            | Girls Graduated.....103                            |
| Average of all boy.....108<br>students for school | Average of all girl.....107<br>students for school |

Using the I. Q. tests as a basis, the above chart would indicate that the Negro students who stay in school until they graduate are the ones with the higher I. Q.'s., and therefore possibly have more perseverance, better economic conditions at home, and a greater desire for a college education.

It would seem to indicate from this chart that the lower ranking

Negro student with less intelligence drops out of school at an earlier stage in high school. A factor which should also be considered here is that an improvement in status usually means an improvement in test score and that social and economic factors cannot be disregarded in racial comparisons.

Another problem is that of limited background and experience.<sup>20</sup> The child's contacts in the home and in the community are related to his ability to form the proper concepts of words and numbers. The deficiencies which Negro children exhibit in standardized tests and in high school work may be traced to a deficiency in reading and arithmetical processes, which may in turn be traced to a lack of experience with things, processes, and people, according to Jennie D. Porter<sup>21</sup> in The Problem of Negro Education in Northern and Border Cities. The Negro has been branded as inferior mentally, the results of many psychological tests. Many believe this apparent difference due to dissimilar educational opportunities, training, and social and economic conditions, while others think there is a fixed native difference between the two races.

<sup>22</sup>Quantitative studies based on various kinds of tests show that a population of the same descent changes its reactions according to changes in its environment.

Otto Klineberg<sup>23</sup> has shown that Negro children transferred from

<sup>20</sup>Ambrose Caliver, "Elementary Education of Negroes", Social Life, May 1940, p. 243-247

<sup>21</sup>Jennie D. Porter, Abstract of Graduate Thesis in Education, Teachers College, University of Cincinnati, 1927-31, pp. 184-190

<sup>22</sup>Franz Boas and others--General Anthropology, 1938, p. 122

<sup>23</sup>Otto Klineberg--Race Differences, 1934, pp. 186 ff.

rural districts to Urban improve in the formal intelligence tests in direct ratio to the length of city life. Those who have lived in the city longest approach other city children in their performance, while those newly arrived are decidedly inferior.

From this study one would believe that the social and economic conditions are affecting to some degree the I. Q. of the Negro students at Central.

A study of Central graduates, according to the tests given them, indicates that the findings of Klineberg do not work out with this particular group. However, it does seem that possibly the Negroes who have migrated into Omaha and whose children are in this class represent a more select group.

Table V

| <u>Age of Entrance</u> | <u>Boys</u>             |                               | <u>Graduates</u> |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
|                        | <u>Number in School</u> | <u>Dropped or Transferred</u> |                  |
| 12 years               | 1                       | 1                             | 1                |
| 13 years               | 6                       | 1                             | 7                |
| 14 years               | 17                      | 20                            | 14               |
| 15 years               | 8                       | 17                            | 10               |
| 16 years               | 3                       | 5                             | 5                |
| 17 years               | 0                       | 1                             | 0                |
| Average                | 14.17                   | 14.6                          | 14.3             |
|                        | <u>Girls</u>            |                               |                  |
|                        | <u>Number in School</u> | <u>Dropped or Transferred</u> |                  |
| 12 years               | 1                       | 1                             | 1                |
| 13 years               | 23                      | 7                             | 18               |
| 14 years               | 34                      | 34                            | 22               |
| 15 years               | 23                      | 29                            | 4                |
| 16 years               | 2                       | 4                             | 0                |
| 17 years               | 1                       | 0                             | 0                |
| 18 years               | 0                       | 1                             | 0                |
| Average                | 14.05                   | 14.42                         | 13.64            |

The general average age of entrance of Negro boys is 14.33 years as compared to 14 years for the general average age of the school. The general average age of entrance of Negro girls is 14.03 years as compared to 13.9 for the general average of the school. The general average of entrance for the whole school was taken by averaging the entering Freshmen class of 1940. The higher ages of entrance into high school from the grades by the Negroes possibly could be explained by home and other environment. Since nearly all children start to kindergarten at approximately the same age, these Negroes were probably retarded in the grades. Since the adoption of the policy in the Omaha School System of no failures in the grades, a tendency to lower the average age of the entering high school Negro students in the future should be apparent.

The Negro boys who dropped school were three months older than the Negro boys' average, and six months older than the boys' average for the whole school. The Negro girls were four months older than average entrance age of Negro girls and seven months older than the general average of the school.

The age of graduation of the Negro students is higher than the average of the school as the following table shows.

Table VI

AGE AT GRADUATION

|                    |               |
|--------------------|---------------|
| Negro Boys.....    | 18 yrs. 4 mo. |
| Negro Girls.....   | 17 yrs. 6 mo. |
| School--Boys.....  | 17 yrs. 6 mo. |
| School--Girls..... | 17 yrs. 2 mo. |

In Central it seems that the average Negro student must take a longer time to do the necessary work for graduation as compared to the average of the school. Many of the Negroes do take extra work in the summer sessions of school or take one or two extra semesters to finish the work. Mr. Will,<sup>24</sup> Principal of Central High School, stated that it seemed to be necessary at Central for the Negroes to spend extra time in order to complete the course. This condition is probably due to the lack of proper home conditions, inducive to good study, lack of parental interest, and an inclination to do as little as necessary to get by. Mr. Porter,<sup>25</sup> of Technical High School, made a similar statement concerning the Negro students of his school.

Table VII

NUMBER OF SEMESTERS ATTENDED BEFORE LEAVING CENTRAL

| Number of<br>Semesters | Drops | Transfer<br>to<br>Tech | Transfer<br>to<br>South | Transfer<br>to<br>North | Transfer<br>to<br>Other Schools |
|------------------------|-------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <u>Boys</u>            |       |                        |                         |                         |                                 |
| 1                      | 9     | 2                      | 1                       | 0                       | 2                               |
| 2                      | 10    | 6                      | 0                       | 1                       | 3                               |
| 3                      | 5     | 0                      | 0                       | 0                       | 0                               |
| 4                      | 8     | 3                      | 0                       | 0                       | 1                               |
| 5                      | 0     | 0                      | 0                       | 0                       | 0                               |
| 6                      | 1     | 0                      | 0                       | 0                       | 1                               |
| 7                      | 0     | 0                      | 0                       | 0                       | 0                               |
| 8                      | 3     | 1                      | 0                       | 0                       | 0                               |
| <u>Girls</u>           |       |                        |                         |                         |                                 |
| 1                      | 14    | 7                      | 0                       | 1                       | 4                               |
| 2                      | 10    | 7                      | 1                       | 3                       | 6                               |
| 3                      | 7     | 3                      | 0                       | 1                       | 2                               |
| 4                      | 5     | 3                      | 1                       | 0                       | 3                               |
| 5                      | 3     | 0                      | 0                       | 0                       | 1                               |
| 6                      | 3     | 2                      | 0                       | 0                       | 2                               |
| 7                      | 3     | 0                      | 0                       | 0                       | 0                               |
| 8                      | 2     | 0                      | 0                       | 0                       | 0                               |

<sup>24</sup> Fred Hill - Principal, Central High School, Omaha, Nebraska

<sup>25</sup> Dwight Potter - Principal, Technical High School, Omaha, Nebraska

The large number who drop completely from school or become dissatisfied and transfer to another school do so early in their high school course as they are unable to adjust themselves to new surroundings, have perhaps been misinformed with respect to courses offered or have lacked encouragement from their parents to remain in school. The findings in this table would lead one to believe that the large numbers quit school as soon as they reach sixteen years. Also their I. Q.'s. were somewhat lower than the average Negro student's as seen by the table on I. Q. ratings. The transfer from Central or another school in the early semesters of their high school careers should be to their advantage as they could more easily adjust themselves to the new school, its curriculum, and its social environment; but this advantage is not taken as is shown on Table VIII -- the follow-ups on the transfer students. It is rather difficult to ascertain the finding for the school as a whole as the many white parents work causes them to be transferred out of the city. It would seem that the percentage of Negro drops and transfers is not much more than the white.



Table VIII

AGE OF DROPS AND TRANSFERS

| <u>Age</u>   | <u>Boys</u>  |                  |
|--------------|--------------|------------------|
|              | <u>Drops</u> | <u>Transfers</u> |
| 14           | 4            | 4                |
| 15           | 4            | 5                |
| 16           | 15           | 8                |
| 17           | 11           | 1                |
| 18           | 7            | 1                |
| 19           | 1            | 0                |
| <u>Girls</u> |              |                  |
| 14           | 0            | 4                |
| 15           | 5            | 18               |
| 16           | 20           | 15               |
| 17           | 14           | 3                |
| 18           | 10           | 3                |
| 19           | 4            | 0                |

While this table shows that four boys and five girls dropped school at the age of fifteen years, there are several explanations. Our school records may not have an accurate check upon whether a student transfers or drops if this should occur during the summer vacation period. Many students drop school a few days or weeks before they have actually attained their sixteenth birthday. However, the number of those on the previous chart who show "dropped" at fifteen years of age is rather small. Therefore it is quite significant that the number dropping school at the age of sixteen years is the highest of all ages since Omaha law does not compel a person to attend further upon reaching this age. Girls stay in school longer than boys as it has been harder for a young girl to obtain work than it is for a boy. The younger ages of the transfers would seem to indicate a lack of ability or interest to adjust, therefore they try another school. These ages are also comparable to the drops and transfers of the school as a whole.

Table II

FOLLOW-UP ON THE 88 STUDENTS WHO WERE RECORDED AS DROPPED  
ON THE SCHOOL'S RECORDS

| Reasons for Dropping         | Boys | Girls | Total | %      |
|------------------------------|------|-------|-------|--------|
| Financial                    | 16   | 9     | 25    | .284   |
| Scholastic                   | 8    | 7     | 15    | .170   |
| Moved from City              | 3    | 10    | 13    | .146   |
| To Finish School out of City | 3    | -     | 3     | .034   |
| Army                         | 3    | -     | 3     | .034   |
| Navy                         | 2    | -     | 2     | .022   |
| Lost Interest in School      | 1    | 8     | 9     | .102   |
| To Marry                     | -    | 7     | 7     | .09    |
| Not Located                  | 3    | 8     | 11    | .125   |
| Total                        | 39   | 49    | 88    | 100.00 |

A personal call was made on each individual whose name appeared on our drop-out list, and the above chart shows the summary of the reasons given. It seems significant that the financial cause would be high as the Negro people are in the lower bracket of income groups. The average yearly income<sup>26</sup> of a Negro family, eighty-five percent of which is contributed by the head of the family, with the remainder divided about equally between wife and children, is around \$750. Of these pupils who dropped, many were able to find full-time work, but most of them worked at odd jobs. Whatever they earned was given to their families. Fifteen found the high school work too difficult and dropped out for scholastic reasons, while nine lost

<sup>26</sup>Negroes of Nebraska, Nebraska Writers Project 1940, p. 19

interest in school. They did not see any immediate reason for staying in school. Thirteen moved with their parents out of the city. Three boys went to other schools outside of Omaha. One went to Tuskegee Institute, and the other two went to trade schools in Kansas City, Missouri. The army took three of the boys, and the navy, two. Seven girls dropped school to marry. One girl interviewed said, "It's rather hard to stay in school when you become old enough and have a chance to marry." She married when she was seventeen years of age. Three boys and eight girls could not be located. Three of the girls who are married and have children stated they thought that the high school education they did receive had helped them to make a better home. Their homes were neat and well kept.

Table 1

FOLLOW-UP ON THE TRANSFER OF STUDENTS FROM CENTRAL TECHNICAL,  
NORTH, AND SOUTH HIGH SCHOOLS

|  |         |         |
|--|---------|---------|
| Total Number Transferred to Tech.....              | 27..... | 100%    |
| Number of these graduated.....                     | 2.....  | 7.4%    |
| Number of these now in school.....                 | 8.....  | 33 1/3% |
| Number of these dropped from school.....           | 16..... | 59%     |
|  |         |         |
| Total Number Transferred to North.....             | 6.....  | 100%    |
| Number of these graduated.....                     | 0.....  | 0%      |
| Number of these now in school.....                 | 2.....  | 33.3%   |
| Number of these dropped from school.....           | 4.....  | 66.6%   |
|  |         |         |
| Total Number Transferred to South.....             | 3.....  | 100%    |
| Number of these dropped from school.....           | 3.....  | 100%    |
|  |         |         |
| Total Number Transferred to the Three Schools..... | 36..... | 100%    |
| Number Graduated.....                              | 2.....  | 5.5%    |
| Number Dropped.....                                | 23..... | 63.9%   |
| Number in School.....                              | 11..... | 30.5%   |

Some of the reasons given for transferring are as follows:  
Better school, nearer home, folks have moved, will be able to take  
subject I can't get at Central, all my friends go there, can't  
get along with certain teachers, save carfare.

From this study it would seem that the Negro student who has  
difficulties at Central does not do much better in changing to  
another school. Whether this is due to getting into the wrong  
high school at first and developing bad habits or whether it is  
due to lack of incentive to do well in school regardless of the  
school remains to be seen. If we check back to the table on com-  
parative I. Q's., we find that the transfers rate low as in percent-  
age of graduates. The records<sup>27</sup> of attainment in the schools show  
that the transfer-students as a whole make a very poor showing,  
do very poor work. The number of these who graduate is very small  
as compared to the total number of transfers...two graduating from  
Tech out of 27, and none at North out of 8, and none at South out  
of 3.

Table XI

FOLLOW-UP STUDY ON THE TRANSFERS FROM OTHER HIGH SCHOOLS TO CENTRAL

|                                  |         |        |
|----------------------------------|---------|--------|
| Total Number Transferred In..... | 47..... | 100.0% |
| Number Who Have Graduated.....   | 4.....  | 8.5%   |
| Number Who Have Dropped.....     | 33..... | 70.2%  |
| Number Now In School.....        | 10..... | 21.2%  |

From this study in the comparison of the follow-ups of the students  
who transferred into Central with the students who left Central, one  
finds the results very nearly the same.

Seventy percent of those who transferred to Central dropped out  
before finishing school. Whether this is due to home conditions or

<sup>27</sup> Permanent record card of Technical High School, Omaha, Nebraska

to the lack of other stimuli outside of school is hard to determine. It may be due to the realization that they would never be permitted to earn in the kind of work for which they had prepared themselves by a more advanced education. Some as they come to realize that they could never by anything more than an unskilled worker, or housewife, drop school.

Table XII

TYPE OF OCCUPATION OF DROPS

|                      |    |
|----------------------|----|
| Bus Boys.....        | 6  |
| Odd Jobs.....        | 14 |
| W. P. A. ....        | 1  |
| Shoe Repair.....     | 1  |
| Shoe Shining.....    | 1  |
| Ice Cream Stand..... | 1  |
| Navy.....            | 2  |
| Army.....            | 5  |
| C. C. C. ....        | 1  |
| Porter.....          | 1  |
| Truck Driver.....    | 1  |
| Office Girl.....     | 1  |
| N. Y. A. ....        | 5  |
| Housewife.....       | 10 |
| Not Working.....     | 2  |
| No Work listed.....  | 36 |
| Total.....           | 88 |

Twenty-nine boys have some kind of work, but only twenty-three girls have any type of gainful employment. Ten girls are married and so have listed housewife as their present occupation. All jobs of these drop-outs would fall into the unskilled class.

Table XIII

## RATINGS OF THE NEGRO GRADUATES AS COMPARED TO THE SCHOOL

|                           | <u>Lowest</u> | <u>Highest</u> | <u>Average</u> |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| Negro Boys                | .75           | 1.95           | 1.27           |
| Negro Girls               | .76           | 2.75           | 1.78           |
| Whole School - 1941 Class | .70           | 3.00           | 1.87           |

The grading system used at Central is the four-letter, A, B, C, and D grades. A denotes 90 to 100% work, B denotes 80 to 89%, C denotes 70 to 79%, and D denotes failing or grades under 70%. In determining the ranking of the graduating students, A = 3, B = 2, C = 1, and D = 0, therefore, all the grades the student has made are added up and divided by the total number of subjects he has taken and his rank is determined. It will be noticed that the Negro boys are much lower than the general average of the school, while the Negro girls are just slightly below.

The Senior class are asked each semester if they expect to go to college or university after they finish high school.

From this list 22 of the 42 Negro boys who graduated signified the preference for college. The ranking of these boys is slightly higher than the average for all the Negro boys who have graduated or 1.30, but still lower than the average of the school. The Negro girls showed a preference for college of 26 out of 54 graduates. Their ranking was 1.55 as compared to 1.78 for all girls.

Table XIV

## RANKING OF BOYS AND GIRLS GRAVATED AND THE OCCUPATIONS OF THEIR PARENTS

| <u>Rank</u> | <u>Parent Occupation</u> |              | <u>Rank</u> | <u>Parent Occupation</u> |
|-------------|--------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------------------|
|             |                          | <u>Boys</u>  |             |                          |
| 1.95        | Cook                     |              | 1.34        | Housewife                |
| 1.59        | Minister                 |              | 1.32        | Porter                   |
| 1.59        | Waiter                   |              | 1.32        | Butcher                  |
| 1.59        | Laborer                  |              | 1.30        | Policeman                |
| 1.38        | Porter                   |              | 1.28        | Seamstress               |
| 1.57        | Stationary Engineer      |              | 1.23        | Porter                   |
| 1.53        | Porter                   |              | 1.19        | Maid                     |
| 1.52        | Waiter                   |              | 1.18        | Baker                    |
| 1.50        | Musician                 |              | 1.17        | W. P. A.                 |
| 1.49        | Butcher                  |              | 1.15        | Laborer                  |
| 1.49        | Janitor                  |              | 1.14        | Butcher                  |
| 1.48        | Janitor                  |              | 1.12        | Mechanic                 |
| 1.47        | Butcher                  |              | 1.09        | Janitor                  |
| 1.46        | Janitor                  |              | 1.00        | Maid                     |
| 1.46        | Laborer                  |              | .97         | Laundress                |
| 1.44        | Laborer                  |              | .95         | Porter                   |
| 1.38        | Mortician                |              | .94         | Minister                 |
| 1.36        | Grocer                   |              | .90         | Porter                   |
| 1.35        | Porter                   |              | .90         | Medical Doctor           |
| 1.35        | Janitor                  |              | .75         | Janitor                  |
| 1.35        | Mechanic                 |              | .70         | City Fireman             |
|             |                          | <u>Girls</u> |             |                          |
| 2.79        | Butcher                  |              | 1.39        | Housewife                |
| 2.75        | Weight Inspector         |              | 1.36        | Medical Doctor           |
| 2.53        | Waiter                   |              | 1.28        | Housewife                |
| 2.27        | Housewife                |              | 1.27        | Janitor                  |
| 2.23        | Housewife                |              | 1.25        | Porter                   |
| 2.00        | W. P. A.                 |              | 1.23        | Maid                     |
| 1.98        | Butcher                  |              | 1.23        | Porter                   |
| 1.90        | Seamstress               |              | 1.19        | Laborer                  |
| 1.75        | Butcher                  |              | 1.19        | Mechanic                 |
| 1.74        | Minister                 |              | 1.19        | Laborer                  |
| 1.73        | Stationary Engineer      |              | 1.19        | Laborer                  |
| 1.65        | Chef                     |              | 1.19        | Musician                 |
| 1.63        | Porter                   |              | 1.17        | Laborer                  |
| 1.61        | Butcher                  |              | 1.17        | Housewife                |
| 1.53        | Housewife                |              | 1.17        | Merchant                 |
| 1.53        | Butcher                  |              | 1.13        | Housewife                |
| 1.51        | Janitor                  |              | 1.13        | Chef                     |
| 1.46        | Porter                   |              | 1.13        | Painter                  |
| 1.42        | Maid                     |              | 1.10        | Housewife                |
| 1.42        | U. S. Mail Clerk         |              | 1.09        | Waiter                   |

In order to determine what relation exists between the occupation of the parent and the grades made by their boys or girls, the table was made, taking the ranking of each graduate from the permanent record files at school and obtaining the occupation of their parents from their program cards.

The highest ranking for the boys was 1.95, whose father was a cook, while the highest ranking girl was 2.79 whose father was a butcher.

It would seem that the occupation in itself appears to have little effect on the grades of the children. The children whose parents are professional or merchants rank well down the list. This probably is due to some extent to the home conditions and limited opportunities that Negro has. While many of the Negro parents are very much interested in the opportunities for their children in school, nevertheless, there is not very much social and cultural heritage from which to draw. Since many students coming to high school are lacking in high social and cultural environment it would necessarily be difficult for them to attain very high rankings.

This agrees with Edwin H. Shelley<sup>28</sup> in a study of 1,086 boys at South High School, Omaha, Nebraska. In this study completed June, 1938, he says, "A study of the occupations in itself appears to have very little effect on the grades of the sons."

Crawford<sup>29</sup> reports from white study, "Sons of professional people do slightly better than the sons of businessmen, intelligence

<sup>28</sup>Edwin H. Shelley, Social Determinants of Grades of South High School Boys, Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Omaha, Omaha, Nebraska, 1938, pp. 27-29

<sup>29</sup>A. B. Crawford, Forecasting Freshman Achievement, School and Society, 1930-1931, pp. 125-132



of the two groups being the same, but that otherwise parental occupation has no effect on grades." This is the opposite of our findings.

There are probably many factors that we could mention to explain distribution of occupations according to rankings made in school, namely, incomes which provide for better environmental surroundings.

Table XV

I. Q. RATINGS OF NEGRO GRADUATES BORN IN NEBRASKA AS  
COMPARED TO NEGROES BORN OUTSIDE THE STATE

|               | <u>Boys</u> | <u>Girls</u> | <u>Average</u> |
|---------------|-------------|--------------|----------------|
| Nebraska Born | 99          | 101          | 100            |
| Foreign Born  | 100         | 103          | 101½           |

This would seem to show that the Negro students who were born outside the state to have a higher I. Q. at the time the tests were administered. This probably can be accounted for by the fact that the more energetic and ambitious Negroes would be the ones to leave the South and migrate to the North and to Omaha. This seems to be an exception rather than the rule, although we have no way of knowing as to exactly how long they have lived in the State. Otto Klineberg<sup>30</sup> has shown that the Negro children transferred from rural districts to cities improve in the formal intelligence tests given to them in ratio to the length of time lived in the city approaching other city children in their performance, while those newly arrived are decidedly inferior. Dr. Stoddard<sup>31</sup> found that dull parents are as likely to produce potentially bright children as are clever parents. Another factor must be considered, that many of the energetic and

<sup>30</sup>Otto Klineberg, *Race Differences*, 1934, pp. 186 ff.

<sup>31</sup>G. D. Stoddard, *Time*, Nov. 7, 1938, pp. 44-46. Study of I. Q's., in Iowa Nursery School.

resourceful Negroes migrated to Nebraska and Omaha because of advantages in economic and social conditions over what they had in the South.

Table XVI

GRADUATES WHO ATTENDED ONE OR MORE SESSIONS OF SUMMER SCHOOL

Boys

|                                    |    |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Total graduating.....              | 42 |
| Attending one summer.....          | 12 |
| Attending one summers.....         | 8  |
| Total attending summer school..... | 20 |

Girls

|                                    |    |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Total graduating.....              | 53 |
| Attending one summer.....          | 22 |
| Attending two summers.....         | 12 |
| Attending three summers.....       | 3  |
| Attending four summers.....        | 3  |
| Total attending summer school..... | 40 |

The summer school is run as a special school. Regular subjects are taught by teachers selected by the Principal from the high school faculty roster. Each student is charged a fee of \$4.00 per subject and is given regular value for credits earned. The classes meet for sixty-five minutes, five days per week and session lasts for eight weeks. The school has a two-fold purpose; first, to allow the ambitious student to take advantages of the many subjects offered by the school curriculum. Second, to allow the slow and lazy student an opportunity to make up credits that he has failed in or is unable to carry as a normal load. It would seem from the above table that most of the Negro students fall in the second group. Many of them could do passing work and be able to carry enough credits to graduate at the end of eight semesters of work but they do not. This failure

may be due to the lack of interest on the part of the student and also on the part of the home. Also the work done in the summer sessions is not so high a standard as in the regular sessions, and this fact may be an important reason for so high a percentage of Negro students taking summer work. Fewer boys than girls attended summer school, which fact would indicate that the boys could find work and would be unable to attend. The percentage of Negroes who attended summer school in 1941 was 8.82 percent as compared to 7.58 percent of the whole school.

Table XVII

A STUDY OF THE 1941 GRADUATING CLASSES TO DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF NEGRO STUDENTS ENTERED AS FRESHMEN AND THE NUMBER WHO GRADUATED WITH THEIR HIGH SCHOOL CLASS AS COMPARED TO THE SCHOOL

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Total Number entering school as Freshmen      | 624 |
| Total Number graduating of this group         | 394 |
| Percentage for school                         | 63% |
| Number of Negroes entering school as Freshmen | 51  |
| Number of Negroes graduating of this group    | 17  |
| Percentage for Negroes                        | 33% |

About  $1/3$  of the Negroes who enter Central High School graduate as compared to nearly  $2/3$  for the entire school. According to Mr. Dwight E. Porter, the Negro enrollment at Omaha Technical High School is 7 percent of the total enrollment for the school. There were 720 graduates in 1941 of which 36 were Negroes. Over a ten-year period their school records show that only 2 percent of the number of Negroes who enroll as Freshmen remain in school to graduate.

This would indicate that at Central in the 1941 graduating class with principally academic subjects being offered the difference be-

tween the number of Negroes who enrolled four years before and those graduating is 33 percent.

The I. Q. range of this particular class is from 70 to 117. The Negro students with I. Q's. 99 to 117 did as well as the average of the school so far as graduating was concerned.

The ranking of the graduates showed no Negroes in the first one hundred and only three in the second one hundred. This would lead one to believe that the Negro people are deficient in one or all of the following: ambition, cultural background, home life and opportunities.

Twelve of the first sixteen Negroes in mental ability graduated and four remained in school.

#### Attendance

Six and seven tenths Negro students or 4.23 percent were absent each day as compared to ninety-four or 4.14 percent absentees for the entire school.

This sampling shows the attendance of the Negro students as compared to the whole school. The school records show that the Negro student is handicapped on wet rainy days more than in any other kind of weather. Extremely cold days are not such a handicap to the Negro as the school building is often more comfortable than the home.

These attendance figures are for the second semester of the school year 1940-1941. The attendance records<sup>32</sup> at Central High School show this to be nearly average for the last six years. There is only one discrepancy in these figures, in that they do not

<sup>32</sup>See appendix for attendance card. p. 71

include part of a day's absence.

Table XVIII

RATING OF STUDENTS IN SCHOOL, OF TRANSFERS TO OTHER SCHOOLS, AND  
OF THE DROPS

|           | <u>Boys</u>  |         |         |
|-----------|--------------|---------|---------|
|           | Lowest       | Highest | Average |
| In school | .54          | 2.44    | 1.15    |
| Transfers | .20          | 2.05    | .85     |
| Drops     | .31          | 2.43    | 1.00    |
|           | <u>Girls</u> |         |         |
| In School | .62          | 2.27    | 1.20    |
| Transfers | .14          | 2.25    | .96     |
| Drops     | .33          | 1.50    | .91     |

The ratings of these Negro students in Table XVIII were determined by the same method employed in Table XIII. One will note that the Negro students in Table XVIII are much lower in rating than the graduates in Table XIII. Of the number remaining in school, many of them have no definite plan for the future; therefore they do as little as possible. Transfer and drop out groups represent a maladjusted group. Due to lack of ability to adjust, they either drop out or transfer to another school where they hope things will be less difficult. It will be noted that the average of the boys in school is 30 points higher than the transfers and 15 points higher than the drop outs. The boys' in-school average is 6 points fewer than the girls' in-school group. The girls in school are 24 points higher than the girl transfers, and 20 points higher than the drops. The class average of the 1941 graduates was 1.67.

### Activities

The Negro student at Central High School has the opportunity to participate in all the various activities within the school. Upon checking, one finds that they more or less limit themselves to a relatively few activities. The girls take part in athletics, choir, Girl Reserves, Stamp Club, Student Control, Motor Club, Library Monitors, Speakers' Bureau, and Junior Red Cross. The boys take part in athletics, Boys' O-Club, choir, orchestra, band, Latin Club, Senior play, Library Monitors, Junior Red Cross, Speakers' Bureau, Road Show, R. O. T. C., Opera, and Motor Club. They seem to do much better and take a more prominent part in music and in athletics.

Two of the girls who have graduated out of the group studied have been elected to the National Honor Society. To qualify, a student's grades must rank in the upper one-third of his class, have a well rounded personality, have leadership ability, and have cooperative ability. Several girls and boys have been selected for the choir, which is the highest attainment a student can reach in vocal music. One girl, who was very proficient in shorthand and typewriting served as a teacher's secretary during her senior year. Several of the outstanding athletes during this six-year period of study have been Negro boys. One boy earned four letters in major sports, which has been matched only by three other boys over a twelve year period. Negroes have been the principal point winners on the track team and have been members of football, baseball, and basketball teams. Much of the interest of the Negro boys in

athletics and their ambition in all directions is due to inspiration from Mr. Martin Thomas of the Urban Center.

#### Part IV

##### Opinions of Prominent Negro Citizens

The writer made personal calls on several of the outstanding Negro citizens of Omaha concerning the problem of Negro education. In this group were men and women from nearly all professions and businesses. A summary of the findings are as follows:

Nearly all agree that one of the greatest problems is the poor conditions of the homes. In a large percentage of the homes both father and mother work outside. This creates a serious problem, in that the children are left to care for themselves a greater part of the day. Because of the low income derived from their wages, the parents are unable to provide above the bare necessities; therefore the children run loose, acquiring bad habits and bad companions. This situation is one of the principal causes of the high delinquency rate among the Negroes.

The Negro lives in one principal district of Omaha. The condition that exists in Omaha is similar to the condition that exists in other Northern cities which have a large Negro population. Many of the Negroes brought to Omaha by industrial institutions or those misinformed concerning the opportunities here comprise the great problem group.

The Negro child is handicapped when he starts to school, due to his limited background and experience. Many of the Negro people

feel that the Negro child is further handicapped due to the fact that all around him the leaders and the people he must look to for nearly everything are White. This condition, they feel, is one of the chief factors in deterring Negro youths from striving to advance. An incident that occurred in a pool hall on North Twenty-Fourth Street this spring gives one a good idea of the philosophy of a certain group. A Negro boy who was on his way home from Central High School stopped in at this pool hall. Sitting in the establishment were four or five of his friends who had previously dropped school. When he came in carrying his books, they all began making fun of him for continuing in school. One of their group spoke up and asked, "What good will graduating from Central do you, as you will be using a shovel on W. P. A. the same as the rest of us?"

Yet the leaders of the Negro people feel that the condition in which we find the Negroes in Omaha today, is largely their own fault. One of their greatest troubles is to get cooperation among themselves for any concerted action. It seems hard for Negroes to get an organization working smoothly, especially if there is much money involved as they seem to be very distrustful of one another concerning the handling of someone else's money. It seems very difficult for them to realize that groups should be organized properly, with the one who handles the finances bonded.

These leaders have ideas as to how this condition can be remedied. They say it must come gradually, probably taking two or three generations to bring it about. Nevertheless they feel that they are making some progress through their Newspaper, Y. W. C. A., Urban Center, and two



playgrounds. They feel that they can do much more toward their goal if they can get further cooperation from the City Government and from leading White citizens interested in their situation. They feel a need for a Y. M. C. A., a Social Center, a Library, and a Housing Project for the low economic groups that the present Federal Housing Project does not meet. They also feel that through the Negro Women's Organization, and Parent-Teachers Organizations, they can do much toward bettering the homes.

Also the leaders feel that the Negro people should have some of their people on the teaching force of our Public Schools. Today they have Mrs. Robbie Turner Davis, who is employed at Central one day per week and four days per week at Technical High School as a Counselor for the Negro students. They have two men on the staff teaching Physical Education in two of the grade schools. The Negro people feel that if the better members of their race can become employed in our public school, it will be a great incentive for their younger folk to continue in school.

Another suggestion that the public high schools should have outstanding National Negro people appear before the school in an all-school assembly. This, they feel would do two things; first, let the general public know what the Negroes are accomplishing today; secondly, be an inspiration to the Negro students to emulate their great.

The last suggestion of the Negro leaders was that the Negroes should award scholarships for outstanding Negro students so that they could go on to college and become leaders, this money for the scholarship to be donated by the Negroes themselves.

Part V

Sampling of One Hundred Families in the Principal Negro Area

A sampling was made of the one hundred families from the principal Negro areas of the city. This area, as shown by the map on page 51 lies between Cuming and Pratt Streets and nineteenth and thirty-fifth Streets. The area was divided into smaller areas and a representative number of families were interviewed. These families were picked at random to get as near a cross section as possible.

The questions were asked concerning Church affiliation, type of work, length of employment at present place of work, membership in a fraternal organization, ownership or rental of their homes, and home conditions, number of children, extent of school education of parents, and the parents' attitude toward education for their families.

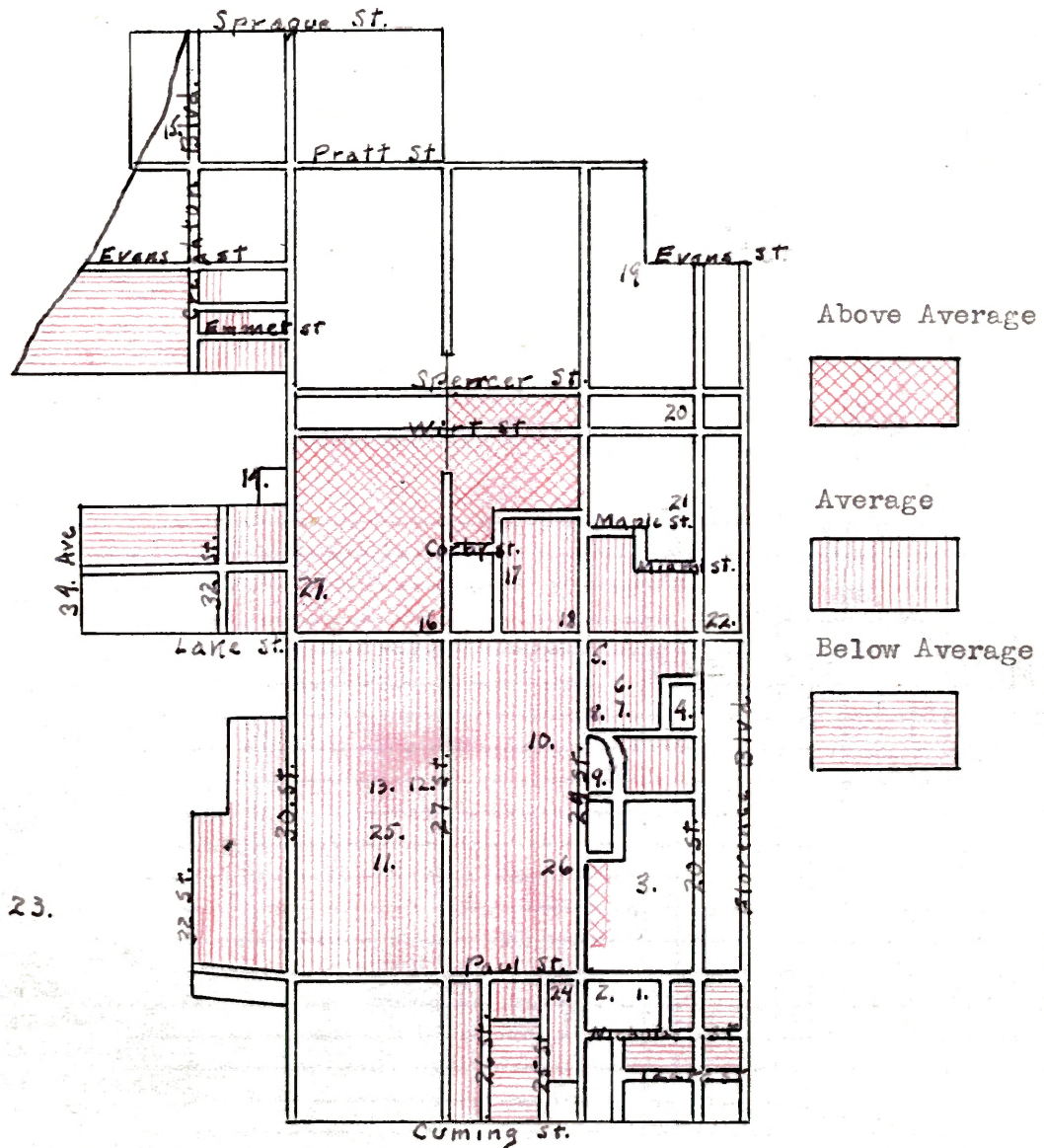
This map on page 51 shows the area which contains the larger proportion of the Negro population of the city. The principal social institutions are marked and labeled. These institutions include the public schools, major churches, parochial schools, recreation center, Negro play grounds, Urban center, Y. W. C. A., Elks hall, and the Ritz theatre. The Ritz theatre is included because of the major part it plays in the affairs of the community. It contributes to education through the pictures and the material contributions that the theatre makes to worthy causes. The picture show is considered a major form of recreation for the Negro youth. The management of the theatre has on a number of occasions donated the use of the building to community projects.

Sections of the area are marked to show the divisions according to home conditions. The classification of "above average", "average", and "below average" are so made according to the standard as established by the Negroes.

Table XIX

PRINCIPAL NEGRO AREA OF OMAHA

Economic Classification and Principal Social,  
Religious, and Educational Institutions.



- |                                       |                                   |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Church of St. Phillips             | 14. Howard Kennedy School         |
| 2. Kellom Grade School                | 15. Druid Hill School             |
| 3. Fontenelle Home Recreation Grounds | 16. Seven Day Adventist Church    |
| 4. Negro Recreation Field             | 17. Negro Recreation Field        |
| 5. Urban League Center                | 18. Elks Hall                     |
| 6. St. Johns A. M. C. Church          | 19. Lothrop Grade School          |
| 7. Negro Y. W. C. A.                  | 20. Sacred Heart Parochial School |
| 8. Zion Church                        | 21. Blair Chapel Church           |
| 9. Ritz Theatre                       | 22. Lake Grade School             |
| 10. Clives Temple Church              | 23. Franklin                      |
| 11. Long Grade School                 | 24. Pilgrim Baptist Church        |
| 12. American Legion                   | 25. Salem Baptist Church          |
| 13. St. Benedict Moor                 | 26. Bethel A. M. E. Church        |
| 27. Hillside Presbyterian Church      |                                   |

Fontenelle Homes  
19th to 23rd St., Paul to Cuning  
25th Cuning Street  
Hamilton Street  
Franklin Street  
Long School  
26th to 30th St. Lake to Burdette  
West side 30th St., Lake to Maple  
24th to 26th, Lake to Grant  
24th to 26th, Lake to Spencer  
26th to 30th, Lake to Spencer  
Druid Hill  
Locust St., 19th to 24th St.  
Grace to Miami, 19th to 24th St.

|                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Odd Jobs        |   |   |   | 1 | 1 |   |   |   | 2 |   | 1 |
| Attorney        |   |   | 1 |   | 1 |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Medical Doctor  |   |   | 1 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Utilities       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 1 |   |   |   |
| Maid            | 2 | 2 |   | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 |   | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Housewife       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 1 |   |   | 2 |
| Coal Company    |   |   | 1 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Druggist        |   |   |   |   |   |   | 1 |   |   |   |   |
| Hair Dresser    |   |   |   |   |   | 1 | 1 |   |   |   |   |
| Mechanic        |   |   |   | 1 |   |   | 1 |   |   |   |   |
| U. S. Mail      |   |   | 2 |   |   |   | 1 |   | 1 |   |   |
| Minister        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 1 | 1 |   |
| Florist         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 1 |   |   |
| Rooming House   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 1 |   |   |   |   |
| W. P. A.        | 6 | 1 |   |   |   | 1 | 1 |   | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Contractor      |   |   |   | 1 |   |   |   |   |   |   | 1 |
| Am. Smelter     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 2 |   | 1 |   |
| Window Cleaning |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 1 |
| Bomber Plant    | 1 |   | 1 |   |   | 1 | 1 | 1 |   | 1 | 1 |
| Nebraska Power  |   |   |   |   |   |   | 1 |   |   |   | 1 |
| City Hall       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 1 |
| Waiter          |   |   |   | 1 |   | 4 | 2 | 5 |   |   | 1 |
| Porter          | 2 |   |   |   |   | 2 | 1 |   | 1 |   | 1 |
| Own Business    | 1 |   | 1 |   | 1 |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Meat Packing    | 1 |   | 1 | 1 | 1 |   |   | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Retired         |   |   | 2 | 3 | 1 |   |   |   | 1 |   |   |

Table XXI  
CONDITIONS OF HOMES BASED UPON THE STANDARD  
OF THE NEGRO PEOPLE

|                               | <u>Own</u>                  |         |                  | <u>Rent</u>                 |         |                  |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------|------------------|-----------------------------|---------|------------------|
|                               | Average<br>Below<br>Average | Average | Above<br>Average | Average<br>Below<br>Average | Average | Above<br>Average |
| Fontenelle Homes              |                             |         |                  |                             | 6       | 5                |
| 19th-23rd St., Paul-Cunning   |                             | 2       |                  |                             | 2       |                  |
| 25th and Cuning Street        |                             | 2       |                  | 5                           |         |                  |
| Hamilton Street               |                             | 4       |                  | 2                           | 1       |                  |
| Franklin Street               |                             |         | 6                |                             | 3       | 1                |
| Long School                   |                             |         |                  | 2                           | 2       |                  |
| 26th-30th St., Lake-burdette  |                             | 12      | 1                |                             | 8       |                  |
| West side 30th St. Lake-Maple |                             | 2       |                  | 1                           | 3       |                  |
| 24th-26th Lake to Grant       |                             | 5       | 1                | 1                           | 2       |                  |
| 24th-26th Lake to Spencer     |                             | 1       | 5                | 1                           | 2       | 1                |
| 26th-30th Lake to Spencer     |                             |         | 3                | 1                           | 4       |                  |
| Druid Hill                    |                             | 1       | 1                | 4                           | 1       |                  |
| Locust 19th-24th Street       |                             | 1       |                  |                             | 2       |                  |
| 19th-24th St., Grace-Miami    |                             | 2       |                  | 3                           | 7       | 1                |

Under the conditions of the homes, the above classification of "below average", "average", and "above average" is based upon the standard of the Negro people.

This table also shows the number of homes in each district occupied by the owners and the number by renters. It is interesting to note the correlation between the home ownership and above average ranking. Ownership gives a certain feeling of permanency and pride which probably helps to account for the difference.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER FAMILY  
ACCORDING TO SECTIONS

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| Fontenelle Homes.....                   | 2 2/7  |
| 19th to 23rd St., Paul to Cuming.....   | 2.5    |
| 25th Cuming Street.....                 | 5 3/7  |
| Hamilton Street.....                    | 4 4/7  |
| Franklin Street.....                    | 2 6/10 |
| Long School.....                        | 3      |
| 26th to 30th St., Lake to Burdette..... | 3 plus |
| West side 30th St., Lake to Maple.....  | 2.5    |
| 24th to 26th, Lake to Grant.....        | 4      |
| 24th to 26th, Lake to Spencer.....      | 3.5    |
| 26th to 30th, Lake to Spencer.....      | 4      |
| Druid Hill.....                         | 3      |
| Locust St., 19th to 24th Street.....    | 2      |
| Grace to Miami, 19th to 24th.....       | 2.5    |

Of the parents who answered this part of the questionnaire concerning the amount of their education---

10 parents were college educated

46 parents were high school graduates

52 parents were grade school graduates  
108 Total

Twenty-six families indicated little concern for education in general, or for their children. In the Druid Hill section where the lower economic group lives, only one out of the seven families had any interest in schools. This, however, is the section where only

one set of parents had any education above the grade school level. These families indicated to the interviewer that their was an economic problem as it was necessary for the child to get a job as soon as possible, which necessity affected their schooling.

Table XXIII

AVERAGE LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT AT THE PRESENT JOBS

| <u>Areas</u>                       | <u>Length of Employment</u> |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Fontenelle Homes                   | 6 years                     |
| 19th to 23rd St., Paul to Cuming   | 4 years                     |
| 25th Cuming Street                 | 5 years                     |
| Hamilton Street                    | 13 years                    |
| Franklin Street                    | 7 years                     |
| Long School                        | 15 years                    |
| 26th to 30th St., Lake to Burdette | 7½ years                    |
| West side 30th St., Lake to Maple  | 1 year                      |
| 24th to 26th, Lake to Grant        | 8½ years                    |
| 24th to 26th, Lake to Spencer      | 10 years                    |
| 26th to 30th, Lake to Spencer      | 10 years                    |
| Druid Hill                         | 4 years                     |
| Locust St., 19th to 24th Street    | 5 years                     |
| Grace to Miami, 19th to 24th       | 7 years                     |

It would seem that the people living in the poorer areas have been employed for a shorter period of time than those living in the better areas. This is probably due to poor health and a lack of incentive to better their economic and social standards.



RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF FAMILIES ACCORDING TO DISTRICTS

| <u>Section</u>                     | <u>Catholic</u> | <u>Protestant</u> | <u>None</u> |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Fontenelle Homes                   | 3               | 8                 | 1           |
| 19th to 23rd St., Paul to Cuming   | 0               | 4                 | 0           |
| 25th Cuming Street                 | 0               | 7                 | 0           |
| Hamilton Street                    | 0               | 7                 | 0           |
| Franklin Street                    | 0               | 11                | 0           |
| Long School                        | 0               | 4                 | 0           |
| 26th to 30th St., Lake to Burdette | 1               | 19                | 1           |
| West side 30th St., Lake to Maple  | 0               | 5                 | 1           |
| 24th to 26th, Lake to Grant        | 0               | 9                 | 0           |
| 24th to 26th, Lake to Spencer      | 0               | 8                 | 0           |
| 26th to 30th, Lake to Spencer      | 0               | 10                | 0           |
| Druid Hill                         | 0               | 7                 | 0           |
| Locust St., 19th to 24th           | 0               | 3                 | 0           |
| Grace St., to Miami, 19th to 24th  | 0               | 13                | 0           |

Almost the only thing that the Negroes have from their original culture patterns has been their religion. One reason why certain religions are more popular with the Negro than others is that some sects allow the colored people to have a more emotional outlet, which is a carry-over from the tribal patterns. All denominations in this country tried to establish their religion with the Negroes, but many of them were not successful because of the fact that they would not modify their church doctrines to suit the needs of Negroes. That fact is also brought out in this interview of the one hundred families

as the above chart shows. All but three families claim affiliation with some religious sect. It is interesting, however, to note that only four out of the one hundred families claim membership in the Catholic Church. The Zion Baptist and the St. Johns M. E. Church claim the largest membership.

Table XXV

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP OF THE ONE HUNDRED FAMILIES INTERVIEWED

|                        |    |                      |   |
|------------------------|----|----------------------|---|
| St. Johns M. E.        | 21 | None                 | 3 |
| Zion Baptist           | 18 | Bethel Baptist       | 2 |
| Seven Day Adventist    | 9  | St. Mark Baptist     | 2 |
| Pilgrim Baptist        | 9  | Christ Temple        | 2 |
| Bethel A. M. E.        | 7  | Church of Living God | 1 |
| St. Phillip Episcopal  | 6  | Holiness             | 1 |
| Clives Temple          | 5  | God of Christ        | 1 |
| Mr. Moriah Baptist     | 5  | Morning Star         | 1 |
| Salem Baptist          | 4  | Living God           | 1 |
| St. Benedict           | 4  | Paradise Baptist     | 1 |
| Clare Chapel A. M. E.  | 3  | Mt. Calvary Baptist  | 1 |
| Pleasant Green Baptist | 3  |                      |   |

From this table it would seem the Methodist and Baptist denominations to predominate. Of the one hundred families who answered this part of the questionnaire, 18.4 percent indicated a preference for the St. Johns M. E. Church, 16.5 percent indicated preference for the Zion Baptist Church, 8.2 percent indicated preference for the Seven Day Adventist Church, 8.2 percent indicated a preference for the

Pilgrim Baptist, 6.4 percent indicated a preference for the Bethel Baptist A. M. E. Church. The remainder were scattered among a number of churches.

### Summary - Conclusions - Recommendations

These conclusions were deduced from the various types of data studied. They are also limited according to the data studied.

1. The economic and social conditions of the home have a determining influence upon the school interest of the child.
2. Most of the students come directly from five principal grade schools.
3. The Negro students choose Central High School for social reasons.
4. General high school course is the most popular with the Negro students as it gives them general training.
5. The Negro students' I. Q's., rank lower than the average of the school.
6. The entrance age of the Negro student is slightly higher than the school average.
7. The graduation age of the Negro student is slightly higher than the school average.
8. The students who leave Central before graduating do so during the early years of their school attendance.
9. The students who transfer do so at an earlier age than do those who drop.
10. The maladjusted student transfers to another school while those who drop it would seem to do so for financial reasons.
11. Those who drop school work at the occupations of lower economic income than do those students who graduate from high school.
12. The type of occupation of the parent has very little if any bearing upon the grades that the student earns in school.

13. Negro students who attend Summer School do so for two reasons: because they need to make up work and because the courses are less exacting than during the regular school. In proportion to their numbers, only  $1/3$  of Freshman Negroes finally graduate who entered as Freshmen. The average for the whole school is  $2/3$  of the Freshman entrants graduate.
14. The attendance record of the Negro students is below the average of the school.
15. The Negro students rank lower in scholastic attainment than the average of the school. Of the three groups-in school, drops, and transfers-the transfers are the lowest.
16. The Negro students limit themselves to a relatively few activities.
17. The people who own their own homes take more pride in the home and a larger percentage are found in the "above average" classification.
18. The sampling of one hundred families shows that the average number of children per family is 3.1 plus.
19. The better the living conditions of the family, the longer the period of employment.
20. The Negro people from their original cultural patterns have been religious.
21. The Negro people are mostly Protestants.
22. The Negro showed a preference for the baptist and Methodist denominations.
23. A realization of a need for more scientific case studies of

our Negro students to aid in better understanding them, that the curriculum, counseling, and guidance programs, extra-curricular activities, and general educational plan might be adjusted to meet most of their needs.

24. A realization of the urgent need for a vocational guidance program in high school.
25. Economic problems are an important factor in determining the amount of education the Negro child receives.
26. The Negroes should take a realistic attitude and be willing to study the subjects in high school that would prepare them for the limited occupations that are open to them. There would be some exceptions for the few who show exceptional abilities. These are permitted to study for professions, taking the courses necessary to prepare them for their chosen profession.
27. A consciousness of the place that family and racial background play in determining the present achievements and future outlook for Negro students.
28. A realization of the need for and the value of social research as an important part of our educational system.
29. There should be a better understanding of the home life and conditions of the Negro by the teacher if he is to make a proper adjustment.
30. Since the Negro people are nearly all found in the lower bracket of our economic scale, it seems that the public school must lead in a program to better the social and economic conditions. The Negro children coming to school with a low type of family

heritage must of necessity look to the schools for any social patterns that will benefit themselves. One reason a former Negro student gave in coming to Central was to be able to associate, in a small way, with the white students of the upper social group of our society. This small association gave her a feeling of importance when she was in her own group, in that she could say, "I know her", or, "I am in a certain class with her".

32. A realization that the Negro has a place in our social order. That the Negro must study himself and his people in order to aid him in adjusting to society. He would thus learn that the greatest goal of his attainment would be the work and professions that the white and Negro people will support.

A P P E N D I X

4



THE QUESTIONNAIRE SUBMITTED FOR THE  
SAMPLING OF THE ONE HUNDRED FAMILIES

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Employment \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Employment at Present Job \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a Protestant \_\_\_\_\_ Catholic \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Church you are a member of \_\_\_\_\_

Do you belong to a Lodge, Club, Labor Union, etc. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Give the name of your organization \_\_\_\_\_

Do you own your own home \_\_\_\_\_ Or do you rent \_\_\_\_\_

What are the conditions, above average, average, or below average \_\_\_\_\_

The number of children in the family \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of education of the parents \_\_\_\_\_

Attitude of the parents toward educational advances \_\_\_\_\_

## CURRICULUM

The curriculum is given to show the subjects from which students may choose their course of study. \*Drill subjects receive one-half credit per semester.

### Subjects

#### English

English I-VIII  
English Drill  
Reading

#### Household Arts

Homemaking I-IV  
Home Problems  
Clothing I-IV

#### Mathematics

General Math. I-II  
Algebra I-IV  
Geometry I-III  
Trigonometry

#### Industrial Arts

Architectural and Mechanical Drawing  
Architectural Drawing  
Mechanical Drawing I-II  
Shop

#### Social Studies

Social Studies (Freshman)  
World History I-III  
Civics  
English History  
Modern Problems  
Economics  
Contemporary History  
American History I-II

#### Art

\*Art I-VI  
\*Advanced Art  
\*Senior Art  
\*Modeling, Weaving, Lettering  
Costume Designing I  
Advanced Costume Designing

#### Languages

Latin I-VIII  
French I-VI  
Spanish I-VI  
German I-IV

#### Music

Glee  
\*Boys' Junior Glee  
\*Boys' Senior Glee  
\*Girls' Junior Glee  
\*Girls' Senior Glee  
Choir  
\*Boys' Choir  
\*Girls' Choir  
\*Beginning Voice  
\*Advanced Voice  
Harmony  
Music Appreciation I-III  
Music History  
\*Junior Band  
\*R. O. T. C. Band  
\*Concert Band  
\*Jr. Orchestra  
\*Sr. Orchestra

#### Science

General Science  
Biology I-II  
Physics I-II  
Chemistry I-II

#### Business

Business Training I-II  
Bookkeeping I-IV  
Commercial Arithmetic I-II  
Writing  
Salesmanship  
Shorthand I-IV  
\*Transcription I-II  
Commercial Law  
\*Type I-VIII  
\*Personal Type

#### Dramatics

Expression I-II  
Advanced Expression  
Repertoire  
\*Make-up  
\*Stage Crew

Speech

Public Speaking I  
Advanced Public Speaking  
Debate I  
Advanced Debate

Journalism

Journalism I-III

Driving

Physical Education

\*Girls' Gym I  
\*Girls' Sports  
\*Rhythms  
\*Boys' Gym I-II  
\*Boys' Gym Advanced

R. O. T. C.

\*R. O. T. C. (9th grade)

\*R. O. T. C. (10, 11, 12)

COURSES OFFERED

At Central we have two principal courses of study: First, College Preparatory containing all the essential subjects necessary for entrance to College or University. Second, what is termed a general high school course.

The minimum required subjects of the College Preparatory Course are:

English - 6 credits.  
Mathematics - 4 credits. (2 Algebra, 2 Geometry)  
Social Studies - 6 credits. (1 Social Studies, 2 World History, 1 Civics, 2 American History).  
Science - 2 credits. (May be either biology, physics, or chemistry).

The remaining credits to total at least 32 can be selected from the remaining subjects offered.

The minimum required subjects for a general High School Course are:

English - 6 credits.  
Mathematics - 2 credits.  
Social Studies - 6 credits. (1 Social Studies, 2 World History, 1 Civics, 2 American History).  
Science - 2 credits. (General Science, Biology, Physics, or Chemistry).

The remaining credits to total at least 32 can be selected from the remaining subjects offered.

PROGRAM CARD

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL—PROGRAM CARD

Name ..... Date ..... Grade.....

Last Name First Name Middle Initial

Tel. No. .... Locker No. .... Date Entered This Year.....

| Hr.   | Rm. | FIRST SEMESTER |         | Hr.   | Rm. | SECOND SEMESTER |         |
|-------|-----|----------------|---------|-------|-----|-----------------|---------|
|       |     | SUBJECT        | TEACHER |       |     | SUBJECT         | TEACHER |
| A. R. |     |                |         | H. R. |     |                 |         |
| I     |     |                |         | I     |     |                 |         |
| II    |     |                |         | II    |     |                 |         |
| III   |     |                |         | III   |     |                 |         |
| IV    |     |                |         | IV    |     |                 |         |
| V     |     |                |         | V     |     |                 |         |
| VI    |     |                |         | VI    |     |                 |         |
| VII   |     |                |         | VII   |     |                 |         |
| VIII  |     |                |         | VIII  |     |                 |         |

Address ..... Date of Birth..... Age .....

Month Day Year

Birthplace ..... Last School Attended.....

Name of Parent (\*)..... Occupation .....

Parent's Address..... Birthplace .....

City State

CH 4-8-41-5M

\* If last name is different from that of pupil's state relationship



BOYS' PERSONAL STATEMENT CARD

**BOYS**

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

-----

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Pupil's address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday (month, day, year) \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Birthplace (Town or city) \_\_\_\_\_ (State or country) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of parent \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Birthplace of parent \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Last School Attended \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Do you live within the Omaha school district? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you live with your parents? \_\_\_\_\_ If not with whom do you live? \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Central High School—PERSONAL STATEMENT

CH226b-8-39-2M

GIRLS' PERSONAL STATEMENT CARD

**GIRLS**

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

-----

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Pupil's address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday (month, day, year) \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Birthplace (Town or city) \_\_\_\_\_ (State or country) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of parent \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Birthplace of parent \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Last School Attended \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Do you live within the Omaha School District? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you live with your parents? \_\_\_\_\_ If not with whom do you live? \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Central High School—PERSONAL STATEMENT

CH226g-8 41-2M



# INFORMATION CARD

|  |            |                             |          |            |
|--|------------|-----------------------------|----------|------------|
| Child's Name (Last Name First)             |            | Date of Birth (Mo.—Day—Yr.) |          | Birthplace |
| Present Address                            | Phone      | W—C—Y                       | Boy—Girl |            |
| Present School                             | Class      | Date of Entrance            |          |            |
| Last School Attended                       | Class      | Date Left                   |          |            |
| Last Omaha Public School Attended          |            |                             |          | Date Left  |
| Father's Name                              | Birthplace | Occupation                  |          |            |
| Mother's Maiden Name and Present Last Name | Birthplace | Occupation                  |          |            |
| Guardian's Name and Relationship           | Birthplace | Occupation                  |          |            |

Give name of physician (or other person) whom you wished called in case of accident or illness if parent can not be reached.

(Check the Names of those People with whom the child now lives)

**OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS—Information Card**

AO 16-8-41-20M

# ATTENDANCE CARD

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last Name First)

Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

|  |      | Month |    |    |    |    |   |   |    |    |    |      |      | Day | Year | Age |    |    |    |    |    |
|--|------|-------|----|----|----|----|---|---|----|----|----|------|------|-----|------|-----|----|----|----|----|----|
|  |      | 29    | 30 | 31 | 1  | 2  | 5 | 6 | 7  | 8  | 9  | 12   | 13   | 14  | 15   | 16  | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL<br>Second Semester 1939-1940 | FEB. |       |    |    |    |    |   |   |    |    |    |      |      |     |      |     |    |    |    |    |    |
|  | MAR. | 26    | 27 | 28 | 29 | 1  | 4 | 5 | 6  | 7  | 8  | 11   | 12   | 13  | 14   | 15  | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
|  | APR. | 1     | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 15   | 16   | 17  | 18   | 19  | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
|  | MAY  | 29    | 30 | 1  | 2  | 3  | 6 | 7 | 8  | 9  | 10 | 13   | 14   | 15  | 16   | 17  | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
|  | JUNE | 27    | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 3 | 4 | 5  | 6  | 7  | Bel. | Att. | Ab. | T.   |     |    |    |    |    |    |

CH223-8-39-3M

PERMANENT RECORD CARD

|                          |  |  |                     |  |  |
|--------------------------|--|--|---------------------|--|--|
| Name .....               |  |  | Date of Entry ..... |  |  |
| Parent or Guardian ..... |  |  | Address .....       |  |  |
| Date of Birth .....      |  |  | Phone .....         |  |  |
| From .....               |  |  | From .....          |  |  |
| Semester                 |  |  | Semester            |  |  |
| 1 2                      |  |  | 1 2                 |  |  |
| 9th Grade                |  |  | 10th Grade          |  |  |
| English I-II             |  |  | Eng. III-IV         |  |  |
| Reading                  |  |  | Geom. I-II          |  |  |
| Algebra I-II             |  |  | W.H.III-E.Hist      |  |  |
| W. Hist. I-II            |  |  | Latin III-IV        |  |  |
| Soc. Studies             |  |  | French III-IV       |  |  |
| Latin I-II               |  |  | Spanish III-IV      |  |  |
| French I-II              |  |  | German III-IV       |  |  |
| Spanish I-II             |  |  | Biology I-II        |  |  |
| German I-II              |  |  | Bkkg. I-II          |  |  |
| Gen. Sci. I-II           |  |  | H. Mak. III-IV      |  |  |
| Gen. Math. I-II          |  |  | Int. Dec.           |  |  |
| Hm. Mak. I-II            |  |  | Mh. Dr. III-IV      |  |  |
| Mn. Tr. I-II             |  |  |                     |  |  |
| Mh. Dr. I-II             |  |  |                     |  |  |
| Drills:                  |  |  | Drills:             |  |  |
| Art I-II                 |  |  | Art III-IV          |  |  |
| Phys. Tr. I-II           |  |  | Ph. Tr. III-IV      |  |  |
| Glee Club                |  |  | Glee Club           |  |  |
| Orchestra                |  |  | Orchestra           |  |  |
| Trans'n I-II             |  |  | Type I-II           |  |  |
| Writing I-II             |  |  | Stg. Craft.-Art     |  |  |
| Athletics                |  |  |                     |  |  |
| M. Drill I-II            |  |  | M. Drill III-IV     |  |  |
| Semester                 |  |  | Semester            |  |  |
| 1 2                      |  |  | 1 2                 |  |  |
| 11th Grade               |  |  | 12th Grade          |  |  |
| Eng. V-VI                |  |  | Eng. VII-VIII       |  |  |
| Alg. III-IV              |  |  | Jour. I-II          |  |  |
| Civ.-M. Prob.            |  |  | Geom. III-Trig      |  |  |
| Latin V-VI               |  |  | A. Hist. I-II       |  |  |
| French V-VI              |  |  | Eco.-Cont. Hist     |  |  |
| Spanish V-VI             |  |  | Hist. Mus. I-II     |  |  |
| B. Arith. I-II           |  |  | Mus. Appr.          |  |  |
| Physics I-II             |  |  | So. Music           |  |  |
| Com. Law                 |  |  | Chemistry I-II      |  |  |
| Sh. Hand I-II            |  |  | Bus. Tr. I-II       |  |  |
| Expr. I-II               |  |  | S'hand. III-IV      |  |  |
| Pub. Spkg.               |  |  | Expr. III-IV        |  |  |
|                          |  |  | Debate              |  |  |
| Drills:                  |  |  | Drills:             |  |  |
| Art V-VI                 |  |  | Art VII-VIII        |  |  |
| Phys. Tr. V-VI           |  |  | P. Tr. VII-VIII     |  |  |
| Glee Club                |  |  | Choir               |  |  |
| Orchestra                |  |  | Orchestra           |  |  |
| Type III-IV              |  |  | Type V-VI           |  |  |
| Athletics                |  |  | Athletics           |  |  |
| M. Drill V-VI            |  |  | M. D. VII-VIII      |  |  |



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